The Capitol Hill Monitor

Volume 2 Issue 9 OCT/NOV September 1996

**** SPECIAL SUPER FLASH ****
A special tour of the ARMED FORCES INAUGURAL COMMITTEE has been arranged for *4 December at 2 PM.* AFIC HQ is in Suitland (4301 Suitland Road). If you want to go, please call Alan at 301-270-2531 with your car tag number.

NEXT MEETING DATE
SAT. DEC. 7 AT 1 P.M.

Bring a copy of your favorite frequency list, a friend, perhaps even some cookies or any goodies you want to share and join us at the Takoma Park Municipal building at 7500 Maple Ave. That's at the corner of Philadelphia and Maple avenues in Takoma Park. We have the room starting at 1 p.m. and hope to have a guest speaker. Call Alan at 301-270-2531 should you have any questions.

WHITE HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY

By Bill Hardman
(hardman1@ix.netcom.com)

The White House Communications Agency (WHCA) is charged with providing telecommunications support to the President, Vice President, White House Senior Staff, National Security Council, and elements of the US Secret Service involved in the protection of the President and Vice President, and as always in the military, the ubiquitous "other missions as assigned".

Included in the support it provides are secure and non-secure voice, record communications, audio-visual services, data processing, photographic, and drafting services. These missions are performed in the Washington, DC, area, and wherever the President or Vice President may travel in the world. Although it works closely with the USSS for obvious reasons, it is NOT part of the USSS. However, several USSS frequencies are in the standard channel pattern for protection of the President, etc.

The WHCA is a joint element (meaning it has members from two or more of the military services, in this case all four) of the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) --formerly known as the Defense Communications Agency. WHCA's current headquarters, "Cloudburst", is at the Anacostia Naval Station. In addition to the elements in the DC area, WHCA has five detachments at various locations throughout the world (one at Camp David --"Cactus"), and the capability to set up temporary sites wherever needed.

One of WHCA's better known elements, at least to scanner listeners, is "Roadrunner", the communications van that accompanies the President as he moves around the nation's capital. It has become so well known that the movements themselves are often referred to as roadrunners, particularly by the DC police.

The agency was originally organized as the White House Signal Detachment of the US Army in 1942 and was a part of the Military District of Washington (MDW). Its duties then and now were pretty much the same, although the equipment in use has changed a bit. So did the size of the detachment --in 1942 it was a team of only 32 individuals. In addition to the five detachments noted above, the WHCA has six staff elements and seven organizational units in the DC area.

The name was changed in 1954 to the White House Army Signal Agency and moved from command of the MDW to that of the Chief Signal Officer of the Army. In 1962, it became a joint operation rather than a purely Army one and was placed under the Defense Communications Agency and given its current name.

The White House Communications Center identifies as "Crown". It has the capability of operating on any of the USSS frequencies, but does not routinely do so. It does, however, operate both the secure and non-secure radiotelephone systems, the most commonly known being "Echo/Foxtrot" (407.85/415.70) and "Yankee/Zulu"(162.6875/171.2875), although both of these systems are being used less and less in favor of satellite links and specially designed secure cellphones.

The WHCA also operates the "Whiskey" paging system on 167.025/413.05. Administrative traffic, including couriers, was formerly on 418.125. This has now been replaced and such traffic is on what is euphemistically referred to as the "Belvoir" trunked system (406.2, 406.3, 406.525, 406.775, 407.025, 407.95, 408.85, 409.25 and 411.2). Although 32.23 ("Able") is almost never used anymore in the Washington area, it has been reported in use by Roadrunner in other areas. "November" (166.70) continues in use in the DC area but is usually en-

crypted. Sierra (166.5125) is only used occasionally in the Washington area for administrative purposes.

It's time to listen...

With the presidential campaign now over, it is time to start listening closely to the myriad of unusual frequencies that will support the inauguration in January. Of particular interest will be the military bands, both VHF and UHF, including the trunked systems. By the time you read this, technicians should be busy setting up and testing the various radio systems.

The Armed Forces Inaugural Committee (AFIC) is already operating on the Fort Belvoir trunked system. On Friday, 15 November, communications technicians began testing a system of at least 12 channels in the 138-144 and 148 to 150 military bands. Several of these frequencies were used during the 1993 inauguration, while a couple are new. Heard so far are 138.35, 138.90, 148.475, 148.875, 149.125, 149.15, 149.175, and 150.325, all with a CTCSS of 156.7.

A little later in the year similar traffic may be heard as the various civilian facilities, that will host inaugural events or be otherwise involved, check their communications systems. We encourage you to phone, mail, e-mail, carrier pigeon, or transmit by any other means available what you may hear to Alan Henney or Bill Hardman (address info at the end of the newsletter) so that it can be shared.

SCANNING LOCAL AIRPORTS

by Alan Henney and Bill Hardman

Most of us probably dedicate the bulk of the channels in our scanners to public safety and perhaps federal and business frequencies while neglecting the aircraft band. Poor scanner reception of the amplitude-modulated (AM) aircraft band and often cryptic messages have contributed to many of us getting frustrated while monitoring aircraft communication. But don't let these difficulties prevent you from enjoying the aircraft band!

You don't have to be a pilot to understand what you're hearing. Aeronautical charts and laminated frequency cards are a valuable source for scanner listeners who want to know more about scanning the aircraft band. To request copies of these free publications, write the following agencies:

Delaware Aeronautics Administration, PO Box 778, Dover, DE 19903

Maryland Aviation Administration, PO Box 8766, BWI Airport, MD 21240

Virginia Department of Aviation, 5702 Gulfstream RD, Richmond International Airport, Sandston, VA 23150

Let's start by taking a look at a few terms which frequently appear in aircraft frequency listings.

App Con Approach control
ASOS Automated surface observation system
ATIS Automatic terminal advisory service (recorded weather and airport information)
AWOS Automated weather observation system
Clnc Del Clearance delivery
Dep Cntl Departure control
FBO Fixed Base Operator (the company that operates the general aviation terminal)
Gnd Con Ground control
PCL Pilot-controlled lighting
Tower Control tower
Unicom Radio communications facility that provides general airport advisory service.

Many smaller airports use "pilot controlled lighting" (PCL). Runway lights can be activated by keying the aircraft radio microphone several times, often on the airport's primary frequency. Military helipads usually have a discrete frequency for this purpose. If a separate frequency is used for PCL, it is noted below. Telemetry frequencies in the 108 to 118 MHz range, which are used solely as navigation aids, have been omitted.

WASHINGTON TRI-AREA TERMINAL CONTROL AREA

Baltimore
119.0/228.4 (020 to 100 deg)
124.55/325.8 (101 to 130 deg)
119.7/231.6 (131 to 180 deg)
128.7/307.9 (181 to 019 deg)

Dulles
126.1/384.9 (331 to 090 deg)
120.45/390.9 (241 to 330 deg)
124.65/390.9 (091 to 240 deg)

Washington National
124.2/269.0 (East)
119.85/322.3 (West)

NOTE: These are the primary approach frequencies for the area covering the three major Washington-Baltimore airports. Each of the airports has additional frequencies for departure, as well as approach, control. These are listed with the airports on the following pages.

All FAA approved airports have an approved alpha or alpha numeric designators. Civilian airports have a three character designation. Military airports have a designation preceded by the letter "K", which is only rarely used and has been eliminated from the following lists. Airports with a manned tower are designated by letters; those that do not have a tower use an alpha-numeric designation.

Civilian aircraft operate in the VHF band. The UHF band, also AM, is used for control of military, primarily high performance, aircraft. When used, the base (i.e., the traffic controller) side is simulcast on both VHF and UHF, while the aircraft will remain on their respective frequencies.

Air traffic controllers will also combine frequencies on the VHF band during periods of low traffic and/or reduced staffing. When this is done, the ground station will be simulcast on both VHF frequencies. This procedure allows one traffic controller to control a larger area of air space because he will be monitoring both sectors.

One final note, "approach control" and "departure control" are often used interchangeably. This is because at most airports they are in fact used interchangeably. A given frequency will be used for a geographic area,say north of the aiport. When weather conditions dictate, it will be used for aircraft approaching from the north to land. When the winds change, the same frequency will be used to control departures. Only at airports with a high density of traffic, and/or difficult approaches, such as Washington National, are there separate frequencies designated for approach and departure.

DELAWARE

Chandelle Estates Airport, Dover (0N4)
PCL 122.7, Unicom 122.8

Delaware Airpark, Cheswold (33N)
Unicom 123.0

DelDOT HeliStop, Dover (0N5)
Unicom 123.0

Dover Air Force Base (DOV)
APP CON 128.0/339.1, ATIS 273.5, Gnd Con 121.9/225.4, Tower 126.35/327.5

Henderson Airport, Felton (0N6)
Unicom 123.0

Jenkins Airport, Wyoming (15N)
PCL 122.7, Unicom 122.8

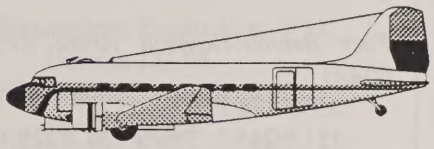
Laurel Airport (N06)
Unicom 122.8

New Castle County, New Castle (ILG)
ATIS 123.95, Atlantic Aviation 122.95, Gnd Con 121.7/275.8, Tower 126.0/305.4

Smyrna Airport (38N)
Unicom 122.8

Summit Airpark, Middletown (N92)
Clnc Del 125.3, PCL 123.5, Uni com 122.7

Sussex County Airport, Georgetown (GED)
Clnc Del 125.55, PCL 122.95, Unicom 123.0



MARYLAND

Andrews AFB/NAF (ADW)
(NAF=Naval Air Facility)
ATIS 113.1/251.05, Gnd Con 121.8/275.8, Tower 118.4/289.6

Baltimore Airpark, White Marsh (1W2)
Unicom 123.0

Baltimore Washington International, Linthicum (BWI)
ATIS 115.1, 127.8; Clnc Del 118.05, Gnd Con 121.9, Signature (FBO) 122.95, Tower 119.4/257.8

Bay Bridge, Stevensville (W29)
Unicom 123.0

Bennett Airport, Salisbury (1N5)
Unicom 122.8

Cambridge-Dorchester Municipal (CGE)
PCL 121.9, Unicom 122.7

Carroll County-Poage Field, Westminster (W54)
AWOS 121.25, Unicom 122.7

Cecil County, Elkton (2N0)
Unicom 123.0

Clearview Airpark, Westminster (2W2)
Unicom 122.8

College Park (CGS)
Unicom 123.0

Crisfield-Somerset County (W41)
Unicom 122.8

Cumberland Regional (CBE)
AWOS 128.625, Unicom 122.8

Davis Airport, Laytonsville (W50)
Unicom 122.8

Easton Municipal-Newnam Field (ESN)
AWOS 124.475, Unicom 122.95

Essex Skypark (W48)
Unicom 122.7

Fallston Airport (W42)
Unicom 122.9

Fort Meade-Tipton Field (FME)
NOTE: Tipton AAF has been closed to all but specialized traffic.
Unicom 127.0

Frederick Municipal (FDK)
AWOS 124.875, Unicom 123.0

Freeway Airport, Mitchellville (W00)
Unicom 122.7

Garrett County, Accident (2G4)
Unicom 122.8

Harford County, Churchville (0W3)
Unicom 122.8

Havre de Grace (3MD9)
Unicom 123.0

Kentmorr Airpark, Stevensville (3W3)
Unicom 122.9

Lee Airport, Edgewater (ANP)
Unicom 122.9

Martin State, Middle River (MTN)
ATIS/AWOS 124.925, FBO/PCL (Rwy lights) 122.95, Gnd Con 121.8/253.4, Tower/PCL (Rwy lights) 121.3/297.2

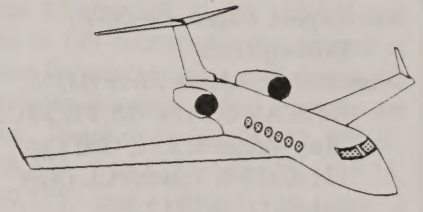
Maryland Airport, Indian Head (2W5)
Unicom 122.7

Mexico Farms, Cumberland (1W3)
PCL 122.7, Unicom 122.8

Montgomery County, Gaithersburg (GAI)
AWOS 128.275, Clnc Del 121.6, Ramp Svc/PCL 122.85, Unicom 122.7

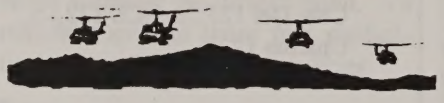
Ocean City Municipal (N80)
Unicom 122.8

Patuxent River NAS-Trapnell (PAX)
App Con 127.95/314.0 (010 to 140 deg), 120.05/281.8 (141 to 009 deg); ATIS 276.2, Gnd Con 120.6/336.4, Tower 123.65/344.4
Patuxent River NAS-Webster Navy Out-Lying Field
Note: Webster OLF is being closed.
Tower 126.2/258.0
Potomac Airfield, Fort Washington (VKX)
Unicom 122.8
Raintree Airpark, Elkton (58M)
Unicom 122.8
Ridgely Airpark (1N0)
Unicom 122.8
Saint Mary's County, Hollywood (2W6)
Unicom 123.0
Salisbury-Wicomico County Regional (SBY)
Unicom 122.95, 123.6
Suburban Airport, Laurel (W18)
Unicom 122.8
Washington County Regional, Hagerstown (HGR)
AWOS 126.375, Gnd Con 121.9, Tower/PCL 120.3/265.7, Unicom 122.95
Washington Executive-Hyde Field, Clinton (W32)
Unicom 122.8



VIRGINIA

Accomack County, Melfa (MFV)
AWOS 118.175, Unicom 122.8
Blackstone Army Air Field/Allen C Perkinson Municipal (BKT)
Tower 126.2, Unicom 122.95
Blue Ridge, Martinsville (MTV)
AWOS 118.45, RCO 124.85, Unicom 122.7
Bridgewater Air Park (VBW)
Unicom 122.7
Brookneal-Campbell County (0V4)
Unicom 122.7
Charlottesville-Albermarle County (CHO)
ATIS/AWOS 118.425, Gnd Ctrl 121.9, Tower 124.5, Unicom 122.95
Chase City Municipal (CXE)
Unicom 122.9
Chesapeake Municipal (CPK)
AWOS 123.675, RCO 119.1, Unicom 122.7
Chesterfield County, Chesterfield (FCI)
AWOS 128.625, Unicom 123.05
Crewe Municipal (W81)
Unicom 122.8
Culpeper County, Culpeper (W49)
Unicom 123.0
Danville Regional (DAN)
AWOS 128.125, Unicom 123.0
Emporia/Greensville Municipal (EMV)
Unicom 123.0
Falwell Airport, Lynchburg (W24)
Unicom 123.0
Farmville Municipal (FVX)
AWOS 132.725, Unicom 122.8



Fort Belvoir-Davison Army Airfield (DAA)
ATIS 128.175, Gnd Con 121.9/245.2, Tower 126.3/229.4
Franklin Municipal (FKN)
AWOS 124.675, Unicom 122.8
Front Royal-Warren County (FRR)
Unicom 123.0
Gordonsville Municipal (GVE)
Unicom 123.0
Grundy Municipal (GDY)
Unicom 122.9
Hampton Roads, Portsmouth (PVG)
AWOS 118.375, Unicom 123.0
Hanover County Municipal, Ashland (OFP)
ASOS 119.025, Unicom 122.7
Hartwood (8W8)
Unicom 122.8
Hummel Field, Saluda (W75)
Unicom 123.0
Ingalls Field, Hot Springs (HSP)
AWOS 118.8, Unicom 123.0
Kellam Field, Weirwood (W08)
Unicom 122.9
Lake Anna Airport, Bumpass (7W4)
Unicom 122.9
Lawrenceville-Brunswick County (LVL)
Unicom 122.8
Lee County, Pennington Gap (PTG)
Unicom 122.9
Leesburg Municipal (JYO)
AWOS 125.225, Unicom 122.8
Lonesome Pine, Wise (LNP)
AWOS 118.6, Unicom 123.0
Louisa County/Freeman Field, Louisa (LKU)
AWOS 118.125, Unicom 122.7
Lunenburg County, Kenbridge (W31)
Unicom 122.9
Luray Caverns, Luray (W45)
Unicom 122.8
Lynchburg Regional (LYH)
ATIS/AWOS 119.8, Gnd Ctrl 121.9, Tower 127.65, Unicom 122.95
Manassas Regional (HEF)
ATIS/AWOS 127.525, Clnc Del 118.15, Gnd Con 121.8, Tower 133.1/360.75, Unicom 122.95, 123.0
Marks Municipal, Clarksville (W63)
Unicom 122.9
Mecklenburg-Brunswick Regional, South Hill (AVC)
AWOS 127.525, Unicom 122.8
Mountain Empire, Rural Retreat (MKJ)
AWOS 123.875, Unicom 122.7
New Kent, Quinton (W96)
Unicom 122.8
New London, Forest (W90)
Unicom 122.8
New Market (8W2)
Unicom 122.8
Newport News-Williamsburg International (PHF)
ATIS 128.65, Clnc Del/Gnd Con 121.9, Tower 118.7, Unicom 122.95
New River Valley, Dublin (PSK)
AWOS 127.375, Clnc Del 121.7, Unicom 122.7
Norfolk International (ORF)
App Con 118.9, ATIS 127.15, Clnc Del 118.5, Dep Con 125.2, Gnd Con 121.9, Tower 120.8, Unicom 122.95
Orange County, Orange (W93)
Unicom 122.8
Pentagon AHP (Army Heliport)
Tower 143.1/231.3
Petersburg-Dinwiddie (PTB)
AWOS 133.325, Unicom 122.7

Quantico MCAF/Turner Field
App Con 126.2/312.2, ATIS 265.0, Gnd Con 340.2, Tower 118.6/360.2
Richmond International, Sandston (RIC)
App/Dep Con 126.8 (S), 126.4 (E), 119.9 (NW); ATIS 119.15, Clnc Del 127.55, Gnd Con 121.9, Tower 121.1, Unicom 122.95
Roanoke Regional (ROA)
App/Dep Con 119.05 (360 to 150 deg), 126.9 (151 to 359 deg), 124.85; ATIS 118.65, Clnc Del 119.7, Gnd Ctrl 121.9, Tower 118.3, Unicom 122.95
Shannon, Fredericksburg (EZF)
AWOS 128.125, Unicom 122.8
Shenandoah Valley Regional, Staunton (SHD)
AWOS 124.925, Unicom 123.0
Smith Mountain Lake, Moneta (W91)
Unicom 122.8
Suffolk Municipal (SFQ)
Unicom 122.7
Tangier Island (TGI)
Unicom 122.8
Tappahannock Municipal (W79)
Unicom 122.8
Tazewell County, Richlands (6V3)
AWOS 118.075, Unicom 123.05
Twin County Airport, Galax (HLX)
AWOS 118.375, Unicom 122.8
Virginia Highlands, Abingdon (VJI)
AWOS 128.125, Tri-City App/Dep Con 128.675, Unicom 122.8
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg (BCB)
AWOS 133.325, Unicom 123.05
Wakefield Municipal (AKQ)
Unicom 122.8
Wallops Island NASA
App Con 127.95/314.0, Tower 126.5/394.3

Warrenton-Fauquier (W66)
Unicom 122.7
Washington Dulles International, Chantilly (IAD)
ATIS 134.85, Clnc Del 127.35, Dep Con 126.65, Gnd Con 121.9/348.6, Tower 120.1/388.0, Unicom 122.95
Washington National (DCA)
App Con 118.3 (E), 124.7 (W); ATIS 132.65; Clnc Del 128.25; Dep Con 118.95 (west, 9,500 ft and below), 121.05 (west, 10,000 ft up to FL 230), 125.65 (east, 9,500 ft and below), 126.55 (east, 10,000 ft up to FL 190 east); Gnd Con 121.7/257.6, Tower 119.1/257.6 (120.75 helicopters), Unicom (Signature Avn) 122.95

Waynesboro/Eagles Nest (W13)
Unicom 123.05
West Point Municipal (W97)
Unicom 122.8
Whitman Strip, Catlett (0V5)
Unicom 122.9
William M Tuck, South Boston (W78)
Unicom 122.8
Williamsburg-Jamestown (JGG)
Unicom 122.8
Winchester Regional (OKV)
AWOS 124.85, RTR 126.15, Unicom 122.7

EASTERN SHORE UPDATES

Earl Suitor and Bill Zittle report that Salisbury police switched to a Motorola trunked radio system. The system operates on 856.7625, 857.7625, 858.7625, 859.7625 and 860.7625.

Bill also notes that a newspaper article indicated that Salisbury received a $104 thousand grant for mobile data terminals and Wicomico County sheriff received $50 thousand for an additional repeater site on the west end.

Ocean Pines, Earl says, has reportedly worked out a deal to use Ocean City's trunked radio system for its communication. As of this writing we still don't know if Ocean Pines intends to leave its current frequencies or operate on both systems.

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY STARTS BICYCLE EMS PROGRAM

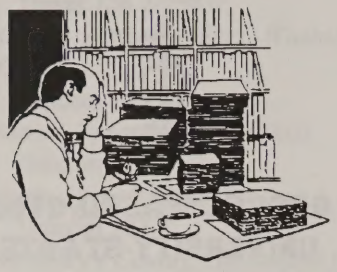
Following in the steps of Georgetown University, the George Washington University started its own basic-life support program for on-campus emergencies. Members of the university's Emergency Medical Response Group (EMeRG) are volunteers who have obtained at least an EMT certification. They are dispatched by the university's police department on 463.675 [173.8 Hz] where they identify as "BERT" units and respond to the scene on bicycle.

UNIDEN TRUNKED SCANNER: JUST ANOTHER HOAX?

Ever since local governments started using trunked radio systems, scanner listeners have heard rumors of plans for a trunked-capable scanner. Unconfirmed reports from the "firepage" listserve indicate that Uniden intends to announce such a scanner during January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

One user said he received an e-mail message from Uniden customer service that acknowledged the existence of the trunked-tracker which would be available in early to mid-1997. But Uniden

has not responded to our multiple requests for information on the project. A Motorola trunked system engineer said he had not heard of the proposed Uniden radio. And other sources say that Uniden decided to cancel the project all together, stating that there wasn't enough demand. Stay tuned!



NEWSSCAN

NEED HELP IN MOSCOW? WHO YOU GONNA CALL? The next best thing to New York City's Emergency Services Unit is a service provided in Moscow by an ex-KGB officer with a fleet of Land Rovers, computers and former spies. On contract to the city to provide emergency rescue services, action teams operated by retired KGB officer Alexander Shabalov's firm, Security Center of Flexible Technology, come roaring to the rescue of Muscovites every day. They arrive in Shabalov's spy-fantasy "multifunctional vehicles" --converted Land Rovers, bristling with high-tech readiness and emblazoned with the company's winged logo, which looks like Batman's.

The rescue units, says the Oct. 9 Baltimore Sun, are guided from Shabalov's headquarters by cellular phones and equipped for every contingency: rappelling devices, winches, scanners to detect listening devices in buildings, extinguishers for 11 kinds of fires, satellite navigation systems accurate within 15 feet, and a contraption called "Diana," a 50-foot roadblock that accordions out from the undercarriage of the Land Rover with explosive-loaded spikes.

It's not unusual for ambulance service to arrive hours late, but Shabalov's rescue teams routinely arrive before ambulances do. Police are notoriously corrupt or incompetent, the Sun charged. Organized crime parades freely through the streets. Public services and utilities are unreliable. Private guards carrying automatic weapons are common in grocery store produce sections as they follow around well-dressed bankers. Bulletproof glass and high-tech alarm systems are standard business expenses.

Shabalov's control room is full of computer screens, crackling radios and eight dispatchers handling as many as 200 emergency calls per day, in addition to 1,800 informational calls on traffic and weather conditions. The city of Moscow has purchased 10 of his converted Land Rovers, and Shabalov keeps four of his own working round the clock carrying emergency action teams, each of which responds to about 10 emergencies a day.

BRITISH PAGER HACKERS DISCOVERED! Britain's Scotland Yard, Home Office and Department of Trade and Industry are all probing allegations of "pager hacking" following a report by Bob Tomalski in the latest issue of What Cellphone magazine. Tomalski is the journalist who discovered four British Army anti-terrorist training videos in a second-hand electronics sale in the U.K. in May. This time, warns the Oct. 17 Intelligence Newsletter, Tomalski declares that hackers are using radio scanners linked to an electronic decoder and a computer using commercially available, inexpensive software to intercept pager messages from anywhere in the country.

Because the location of each of the estimated 850,000 pagers in the U.K. is unknown, each message is beamed across the country. If a radio scanner is left connected to a computer, a record of every pager message sent by any UK pager operator can be collated, the Intelligence Newsletter said. Then, using a word processor program, the list can be searched for the names of politicians, companies or public figures.

After messages detailing the movements of Labour Party leader Tony Blair were intercepted and posted on the Internet, Metropolitan Police sources warned that pager hacking could lead to a terrorist operation or, in other cases, to commercial espionage or blackmail.

Perpetrators need to be caught because owning the equipment itself is not against the law, the article added. The Federation of Communication Services has called for legislation to ban private ownership of radio scanners but that appeal is unlikely to be heard by the DTI because the market in such equipment is worth an estimated 200 million pounds annually.

AND WE THINK WE GOT IT BAD! A 33-year-old woman was caught by Alloa, Clackmannanshire [Scotland] police and fined after police found her listening to police broadcasts on a scanner. When police questioned her about the scanner, she told officers: "I'm just a nosy bitch and I like listening to the channels".

In a separate incident, a member of Lothian and Borders Police Board escaped prosecution over claims he tuned into officers' radios. Scanners, says the Oct. 7 Daily Record and the Sept. 21 Scotsman, cost about 100 pounds and are not illegal to own. It is against the law to tune into the emergency services without permission from the government.

SCANNER LISTENER CATCHES CORRUPT CORRECTIONS OFFICER. A Virginia correctional officer suspected of using his cordless phone to set up drug deals was arrested in October after a radio buff overheard his conversations on a scanner and called the Virginia State Police Drug Hotline,

reports the Oct. 18 Roanoke Times & World News. In listing their probable cause for a search warrant, police acknowledged to a Roanoke County judge that they didn't know who the scanner buff was. But the allegations were supported by surveillance DEA agents had conducted during July in the suspected officer's neighborhood. The officer was arrested after police found powder cocaine and marijuana in his home.

FAMILY RADIO SERVICE RADIOS HIT MARKETPLACE. The first wallet-sized two-way radios showed up a few weeks ago in the 1997 Radio Shack catalog and in selected sporting goods stores after being approved by the Federal Communications Commission , reports Mike Mills in the Oct. 3 Washington Post. Family radio can offer high-quality, two-way radio conversations over distances as great as two miles, with no per-minute usage charges, its developers say. No new service ever comes out of the FCC without a fight, Mills noted. The fight this time is with approximately 15,000 licensed users of the General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS). Frequencies used by the Family Radio Service come from within the GMRS band: (462.55-462.725 and 467.55-467.725).

The head of the Personal Radio Steering Group said the FCC, Radio Shack, and Motorola Inc. are trying to crowd out one of the few remaining bastions for licensed personal radio users. Family Radio will potentially interfere with GMRS users, he claims, and will quickly devolve, like CB radio, into a haven for mischief and abuse.

Family Radio Service is the brainchild of Bob Miller, vice president of merchandising and procurement for Tandy Corp., the Fort Worth parent company of the Radio Shack electronics stores. During a trip to Japan five years ago, he said he saw shoppers keeping in touch with family and friends who were elsewhere in the mall using sporty, colorful radios. This holiday season will be the first test of whether American consumers think it succeeds. The cost will be around $150 per radio, though executives promise that will come down.

NEW GOODIES FOR ALEXANDRIA POLICE. Alexandria police are unveiling a new hand-held computer that enables officers to run criminal record checks from any location and a night-time infrared detector that makes it easier to catch suspects hiding in the dark, reports the Oct. 24 Washington Post.

Officials say Alexandria's new computer equipment represents a quantum leap over the crude computer terminals already installed in squad cars. In the short term, the new system, consisting of Fujitsu ruggedized laptops, will allow officers to check nationwide priors (arrest records), file reports, and transmit to other public-safety vehicles. By 1999, when the FBI launches a vastly expanded computer network for law enforcement agencies, the terminals are supposed to send and receive video images of suspects and missing persons and transmit fingerprints from a crime scene directly to an FBI facility in West Virginia.

Unlike the department's existing MDT network, the new system will send and receive messages via Bell Atlantic NYNEX Mobile's cellular digital packet data network. The department has spent $300,000 to develop the system and purchase 60 units, 30 with city money and 30 more through a federal grant. They are seeking a second grant to buy 30 more units, which would put one at every patrol officer's disposal. Also in fully equipped squad cars is an infrared heat detector. The screen is housed just above the portable computer.

DC POLICE RADIO SHORTAGE! "Would you believe that, in and around the nation's capital, there are Haves and Have Nots when it comes to equipping the police with even the most basic of communications gear?" asks the lead of the Oct. 21 Radio Comm. Report. Officers in the "most crime-ridden area of the city --the 7th District --have patrolled the night shift there on more than one occasion without access to portable radios. Departmental excuses varied from 'no money for new equipment' to 'can't get spare parts' to 'we have more officers than we do radios on this shift' to 'radios not kept in the communications room but in another room to which no one has the combination.'"

A Fraternal Order of Police representative said officers were ordered to "take to the streets whether they have radios or not" by the city police chief. One officer told reporter Debra Wayne that the D.C. government contacted Motorola in hopes of begging some donated units.

DC's AILING EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM. In case you missed it, a 7324-word essay by Steve Vogel appeared in the June 2 Washington Post Magazine on the District's 9-1-1 emergency response system. Response time is slipping overall, and in some troubling instances it has fallen well below department standards, according to police officers and police records, Vogel warns. The system --which receives about 4,600 calls a day, half to 9-1-1 and half to the police non-emergency number, 727-1010 --is overloaded and approaching the breaking point, D.C. police commanders say.

The city's system for dividing its police resources into seven districts reflects decades of jury-rigging, Vogel wrote. The present grid is 25 years old, born of an anti-crime initiative first championed by President Lyndon Johnson. In theory, the districts are allocated resources on the basis of their demand for police service, their incidence of crime, their size and the extent of their commercial property. But it is long out of date.

As an interesting note, Vogel mentions that on the wall in the communications division is a framed article from the June 2, 1935 Sunday Star about the advent of radio-dispatched patrol cars

in the Washington police department. The essay covers several problems that have become apparent to scanner listeners: staff and patrol car shortages, poor response times, declining morale, inconsistent police response from district to district and inadequate equipment. Vogel obviously had cooperation from the police communications division and one has to wonder why the department was so helpful. If you're a police buff, this is a must-read article.

SITE "R" MOVES! Site R at Fort Ritchie, says a press release, is moving to Fort Detrick. The process will take about one year. It is a part of the base closure of Fort Ritchie enacted by Congress. Closure of Ritchie is scheduled for Oct. 1, 1998.

Site R was also known as the Alternate National Communications Center (ANCC) or the "underground Pentagon" and is actually underground just over (or under!) the border in Pennsylvania. Many of the other facilities currently located at Fort Ritchie are also being relocated to Fort Detrick.

SAVE OUR TOWERS! When people think of preservation, says the Capital, they usually don't think of tall steel transmitting towers that the Severn River Association seeks to preserve just south of the Annapolis Bay Bridge. The Navy first built these towers at its 231-acre Naval Radio Transmitting Facility at the end of World War I on Greenbury Point --a spit of land in the Chesapeake Bay just east of Annapolis. The 19 antenna towers range in height from 60 feet to 1,200 feet. The oldest ones still standing are the three 600-foot Eiffel Tower-style structures at the end of the point, dating from the mid-1930s.

The antennas, says the Washington Post, had been used as part of the Navy's very low frequency radio network to communicate with submarines in the Atlantic Ocean and with NATO forces. The Navy plans to sell the site and pull down the towers. But the association wants to save at least one tower --possibly for use as a cellular phone tower or even an observation platform.

The towers are to stand for three more years, while a skeleton staff keeps them in shape in case of emergency. The Navy plans to pay up to $6 million to tear them down in 2000. The U.S. Naval Academy is expected to "inherit" Greenbury Point sometime this year and has no plans to develop the land. What to do about the ospreys that live in the towers from March through October is one issue the Navy is expected to address.

FOR SALE

Mike Totten has the following for sale: Yacht Boy 305 portable 13 band receiver w/carrying case ($85); Sony ICF-SW 30 portable 12-band receiver ($70); Bearcat BC855XLT scanner modified to 100 channels, including full 800 MHz ($150); Bearcat BC200XLT hand held 200 channel scanner w/battery pack, never used ($175); Two Bearcat 100/200XLT battery packs, never used ($15 each); one pair of two channel Radio Shack BTX 121 tranceivers on 154.6 ($125 for pair); TNT Super Eagle 200 CB three stage amplifier , new in box ($150). Call Mike at 301-853-1700 or page on 202-206-1700.

Please address all correspondence to Alan. We encourage readers to submit material and to write articles which relate to the hobby. All submissions are subject to editing for both style and content. When submitting material please make certain we have your phone number should we have any questions. We welcome frequency and visitor requests, but please include a SASE.

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The Capitol Hill Monitor is the non-profit monthly newsletter of the *Capitol Hill Monitors*. The newsletter keeps scanner enthusiasts abreast of local meetings, frequency profiles and other topics of interest. Dues are $10 and include 12 issues (back issues cost $1 each). Kindly make checks payable to Alan Henney. Membership will be prorated accordingly in the event of a postage increase.

Meeting Coordinators:
Mike Peyton, Maryland Coordinator
(703-749-7379)
Ken Fowler, Virginia Coordinator
(703-385-2165)

Frequency Forum Computer Bulletin Board:
We encourage computer users to log onto Jack Anderson's Frequency Forum computer BBS at 703-207-9622 (8-N-1). Frequency Forum is the official electronic gathering place for readers of the Capitol Hill Monitor!

Don't forget the meeting on Saturday, December 7. More detailedinformation may then be available about the Inauguration!

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The Capitol Hill Monitor

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[redacted]

**** SPECIAL SUPER FLASH ****

A special tour of the ARMED FORCES INAUGURAL COMMITTEE has been arranged for *4 December at 2 PM.* AFIC HQ is in Suitland (4301 Suitland Road). If you want to go, please call Alan at 301-270-2531 with your car tag number.

NEXT MEETING DATE

SAT. DEC. 7 AT 1 P.M.

Bring a copy of your favorite frequency list, a friend, perhaps even some cookies or any goodies you want to share and join us at the Takoma Park Municipal building at 7500 Maple Ave. That's at the corner of Philadelphia and Maple avenues in Takoma Park. We have the room starting at 1 p.m. and hope to have a guest speaker. Call Alan at 301-270-2531 should you have any questions.